

July 16, 2003

The Honorable Christopher Cox
Chairman, House Select Committee
on Homeland Security
2402 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Turner
Ranking Member, House Select Committee
on Homeland Security
330 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cox and Ranking Member Turner:

We are writing to seek your leadership in advancing Homeland Security Secretary Ridge's proposal to revise the formula used in the Homeland Security Block Grant to ensure funding is targeted primarily to areas where the threat of terrorism is greatest. To date, the Homeland Security Block Grant funds have been distributed under a two-part formula – a minimum amount to every state and the remainder based on state population. The result is that the funding is skewed to states where the threat of a terrorist attack is low, and states and localities where the threat is high do not get the help they need.

Although California is a major potential terrorist target state with its internationally known landmarks and critical infrastructure, it is receiving the least in Office of Domestic Preparedness Homeland Security Block Grant funds per capita as compared to all other states. We strongly believe that, while every state should get some funding under the program, the purpose of these new post-September 11 funds is to help prevent and respond to terrorist attacks. The only sensible policy is for the great majority of the Homeland Security Block Grant funds to be distributed to the states and localities where the threat of terrorism is greatest. To do otherwise wastes limited resources and endangers lives.

To help ensure the formula is more threat based, the Committee should also lower the per state minimum requirement. Currently, every state gets a minimum of three-fourths of a percent of Homeland Security Block Grant funds. This is much larger than in other federal programs.

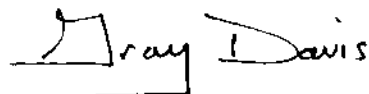
Having such a large proportion of the funding, nearly forty percent in total, distributed without regard to terrorist threat ensures that the program will not effectively achieve the goal of protecting those citizens who most need protection from terrorists. It is absolutely critical to our nation's security that funds are distributed on objectively developed threat and intelligence factors.

It is important to note that even if the Homeland Security Block Grants are revised to distribute the funds based on threat, there will still be a need, as Secretary Ridge has acknowledged, for continuing the High Threat Urban Area Program for those localities where the threat is particularly great.

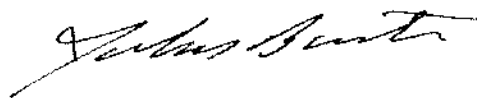
The Honorable Christopher Cox
The Honorable Jim Turner
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Page Two

We look forward to working closely with you on this extremely important national, state and local security matter.

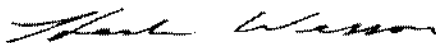
Sincerely,



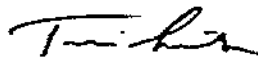
The Honorable Gray Davis
Governor, State of California



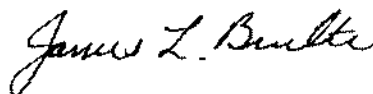
The Honorable John Burton
President pro Tempore, California
State Senate



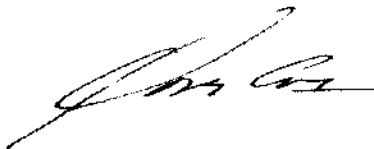
The Honorable Herb J. Wesson, Jr.
Speaker, California State Assembly



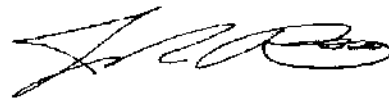
The Honorable Tim Smith
Supervisor, County of Sonoma and
President, California State Association
of Counties



The Honorable Jim Brulte
Minority Leader, California State
Senate



The Honorable Dave Cox
Minority Floor Leader, California
State Assembly



The Honorable John Russo
City Attorney, City of Oakland and
President, League of California Cities

cc: Secretary Tom Ridge
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Speaker Dennis Hastert
Leader Nancy Pelosi
California Congressional Delegation